



Notes from Ad-hoc Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Hwy 99W Corridor Improvement & Management Plan

Date of Meeting: April 12, 2007
Name of Committee: CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Notes taken by: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager
Called to order by: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager
Location: City of Tigard, Town Hall Conference Room
Time Started: 6:30 pm
Time Ended: 8:45 pm

Members: Daniel Barnes, Jesse Black, Steve Boughton, Sue Carver, Tom Fergusson, Tim McGilvrey, William Moss, Roger Potthoff, Cherree Weeks, Rex Caffall, Paul Owen

Others Present: Randy McCourt, DKS Associates; Tom Litster, OTAK

Staff Present: Ron Bunch, Long Range Planning Manager; Gus Duenas, City Engineer

Introductions

Meeting convened at 6:30pm

Presentation of Alternatives Development Report

Mr. McCourt began the meeting by stating what would be coming up. He said they would talk about the Presentation of Alternatives Development Report. They would go into the development of three concepts and at the end of the meeting there would be a question and answer time. Tom Litster of OTAK would give a briefing on the stakeholder interviews.

The question was asked, “What’s the purpose for reviewing the concepts without evaluating?”

The answer: The CAC's role is to guide them so before they really gear up and start running things through they make sure they didn't miss anything. He said it was important that they have the right concepts in place and that it sets the table for analysis and evaluation.

Mr. McCourt briefly went over what had been discussed at the previous meeting. He said the alternatives discussed are not specifically pedestrian, automobile, transit or bike alternatives. All the different aspects of these transportation modes were blended together. Each of the alternatives evaluated has pluses and minuses. Mr. McCourt said the study has pointed out that this portion of Hwy 99W can be divided into four separate areas.

Following are those areas and their characterizations:

1. I-5 down to the Hwy 217 area. This area is characterized with steep slopes, speed of traffic, the lots, the driveway access and the relationship between I-5 and 217 – different than other parts of the corridor.
2. Hwy 217 down to Walnut. This is a transition area – a service area to the downtown. It's a piece of the roadway that as it transitions from 217, is losing its access from these regional facilities, I-5 and 217 and now there is a confluence of cross streets – Walnut, Hall, Greenburg – playing a key influence on the operation of the street.
3. Walnut to Gaarde segment. This is a short segment because it's characterized by some transitional land uses in the last 10 and 20 years where shopping centers have gone in. New changes have been made in the corridor up to that point and the corridor transitions as it reaches the top of the hill just beyond McDonald to more of an access control. Clearly McDonald, itself, is one of the bottlenecks of the corridor. You see a lot more commercial activity and access in this 3rd segment.
4. McDonald to Durham. McDonald was noted as one of the bottlenecks in the corridor at this intersection, and there is a lot of commercial activity. Also noted was the much longer spacing of signals and much better performance on the roadway because of distance between signals and intersection spacing. Better access management contributes to the better function of the roadway in this area.

Discussion, Questions and Answers

CAC comment raised the issue about ODOT closing frontage roads that existed in the past, which brought more traffic onto the highway. Mr. McCourt said that this is one of the things that the consulting team is going to investigate - whether or not access can be controlled enough to keep local traffic from using the highway excessively. He noted that driveways and local streets could accommodate some local traffic. The consulting team stressed that local frontage roads need to be well designed and have appropriate spacing from intersections. There was discussion about vehicle speeds and safe turning movements. The issue was raised about making use of interconnected parking lots to provide for connections between businesses to take trips off the highway. Mr. McCourt noted that traffic counts had decreased significantly in this vicinity of the highway. There were many departures from the highway

traffic counts actually decreased. He noted that the decrease in traffic counts and access management helped the roadway function a lot better. Mr. McCourt said that the consultants developed three concepts. He said that the consulting team tried to group three elements present on the corridor. He noted that the different travel modes were blended in each of the concepts - pedestrian, bike, and automobile transit. He noted that, for example, bicycles are present in every alternative. He said the first alternative is the partial widening concept, and that all of the studies for Hwy 99W had a widening component to it. This has occurred for the past twenty years. The widening concept most discussed in the last 20 years has been from Interstate 5 down to Greenburg Road. Presently, this portion of the roadway is designated as being widened to seven lanes in the Metro Regional Transportation Plan. He said the localized improvements to be made to that portion of the highway, when widened to seven lanes, would be similar to those made to the south of the project, but would not include the through lanes. Turn lanes would exist on the project to the south, but would not have the through lanes. There would be pedestrian improvements to the corridor and this would include minimizing conflicts with driveways, a 4-foot landscape strip, and an 8-foot sidewalk. These would minimize conflicts between the pedestrian and the automobile. He said this was important to avoid the conflicts of having people right on the edge of the roadway. Bicycle improvements are in all of the alternatives. He noted that there are gaps in the roadway, principally near 72nd and Interstate 5. He said these gaps would be connected in every alternative.

He went on to describe transit improvements. Transit improvements are needed to improve the access by pedestrians to transit to deal with conflicts between pedestrians and automobile turning movements near driveways. He said it is important to improve the reliability of transit to deal with the increase in travel times at am and pm peak times. He said that this could be dealt with somewhat by providing queue jumps to allow buses to get ahead of congestion at key congestion points. Overall, he said, it is important to improve the reliability in ease of use of transit along the corridor. This is an important issue in all of the alternatives.

The last component of the alternatives is access management. Access management between I-5/217 interchange – he noted that law mandates this. He said that the law calls out that within a quarter mile of the interchange, limited access is required. The reason is that one gets better performance, there are fewer collisions, and it's a safer environment for pedestrians and bicycles. He said there are numerous issues that are resolved by access management, but there are numerous conflicts with property owners.

Mr. McCourt then walked the group through the four segments of the highway and discussed the impacts on the highway of addressing these issues on each of the four segments. He first discussed the 217 to Greenburg widening. He noted that the pedestrian improvements would likely occur over time. Counselor Buehner pointed out; however, that ODOT had informed the City it is going to plug the gaps in the pedestrian system within the next two years. This project will cost approximately \$600,000.00. It was noted that this was a curb type sidewalk.

Gus Duenas, the City Engineer, indicated that this project is intended to resolve pedestrian safety issues. He said it would take a much longer time to get the right of way to develop a pedestrian system pursuant to the plan – a 4-foot planter strip, 8-foot sidewalk. In other words, it is important to address the safety concerns now and retrofit the highway 99W over the next 20 years as right of ways acquired and development occurs. There was discussion by CAC members about the future of Greenburg access to the downtown. It was noted that this was the reason for the City gas tax – to improve the intersection to enhance capacity and safety. It was also noted that this was very important because it is a “choke point” at this time. The group then proceeded to discuss the physical characteristics of the proposed improvements. There was comment about the fact that drivers use Main Street through the downtown as a cut-thru to avoid the congested portion of Hwy 99W abutting downtown. Counselor Buehner noted that the widening project would abruptly change from seven lanes to five lanes right at the downtown. She noted this is absolutely the worst place to lose lanes. There was a question about widening the viaduct through this alternative. It was noted that the bridge has maintenance problems at this time and there will be a point in time when the bridge/viaduct needs to be replaced. It was also noted that this concept narrows down at the 217 interchange as well because in order to make the concept work all the way through, the I-5/217 interchange would have to be widened, which is a very expensive proposition. He noted that one of the things the partial widening proposal would do would be to improve the turning capacity of the intersection by adding another turn lane. The consulting team then identified areas where queue jumps would be provided which would allow the bus to get ahead of traffic. The consultants noted the reach of the highway where driveways would be consolidated and access limited to the highway. There were questions about how the queue lanes would function. Could the cars use them as a right turn lane? The consulting team noted that when buses are not present, these are available for cars to use as right turn lanes. The consulting team said it is important to get people across the roadway without having to go a quarter mile down the highway to find a crosswalk. He said this is an important thing to resolve. The consulting team then identified the parcels that would be identified by the widening project. He said it is important to have an idea of how many properties would be affected. He noted that there are buildings that might be impacted and pointed out the areas where right of way would be required and areas where buildings would be impacted. He said all three options would illustrate the various impacts to buildings and right of way. The next option is one where access management is being explored along the corridor. He said this contrasts with the first option that proposed partial widening. The difference between the two options is that the access management option is one intended to address the question “can the corridor operate better if aggressive access management is proposed?” He said with this would be substantial capacity improvements at localized intersections. In response to questions, he said that access management would occur all the way from Durham to Interstate 5. He noted that the same pedestrian and transit improvements would occur in this option. He again stressed that the principle improvement would be access management. He described three tools of access management. First, he noted that where there are multiple driveways some would be closed. The second option is when two properties have driveways side by side, and

each has individual driveways; in this instance, driveways would be consolidated. The third option is when there is a driveway near the corner and closing that driveway and then developing a new access from a frontage road or from a side street in order to avoid conflicts in turning movements. CAC members agreed that there are many problems with the large number of driveways along Hwy 99W. It was noted that the left turns onto driveways and from driveways are the ones that principally cause the problems. The consultant team noted that removing the left turn movements that cause most of the problems, would be to have right in right out driveways. He said that this is very important in order to have alternative access of frontage roads, local streets. When medians are used to control access, then these alternative access points are very important. CAC members noted that medians sometime help businesses by making access to businesses much safer and easier. It was also noted that U-turns are another way of providing alternative access - controlled U-turn locations. However, it was noted that u-turns widen the road at the intersections. It was noted that access management does not have the outright widening like the prior option. However, it does include pedestrian improvements, intersection improvements, and transit improvements. Intersection improvements would include many left and right turn lanes. It was noted that three more queue jumps were added to the corridor in addition to the ones that were identified previously. To access the benefits associated with improving transit time along the corridor. Counselor Buehner asked the question about improvements to Hall and 99W intersection. She wondered if the transit queue jumps would be included in the intersection design. He said there will be an additional lane but it will not be a right turn lane, it will be a through lane. The consulting team noted that queue jumps were not added to the seven-lane alternative because there were additional through lanes. CAC members noted that turn lanes, additional lanes, at intersections really constituted widening. The CAC members wanted to stress that this option really did involve widening because it widened portions of the roadway at intersections. The consulting team showed areas where medians could be utilized. Medians were near interchange areas, near congested locations, areas where conflicts needed to be minimized, where capacity could be improved. In addition, they showed where driveway clusters were present. In these areas, driveways would be consolidated. The consulting team noted the need for pedestrian crossings. They illustrated pedestrian crossings at McDonald. They noted where there are very long stretches of the highway where pedestrian crossings are needed. The consulting team noted that even though widening was not proposed, seven lanes there are a number of parcels that would be affected by this proposal for pedestrian improvements. The consulting team noted that 125 foot right of way would accommodate a seven-lane roadway. He said that about 40% of the corridor already had right of way width. 60% of the roadway does not have adequate right of way width. He said that not all of the corridor would be impacted by seven lanes. He said that the second alternative would still have impacts on some businesses. He said that right of way would be impacted all the way up and down the corridor with improvements regardless of what is done. It was noted that widening the highway to seven lanes is not part of any local or regional plan. He said that evaluating the alternative of widening the highway to seven lanes all the way along the corridor, even though it is unlikely to be implemented, is a due diligence exercise. However, he

noted that this is an auto-centric proposal but it needs to be done. He said the alternative needs to be looked at from a factual basis. This alternative would widen the highway to four lanes all the way along.

All remaining areas shall be treated with suitable mulch applied to a depth of no less than 3 inches. Irrigation: all landscaping shall be provided with underground irrigation. Street trees: one street tree shall be provided within or immediately adjacent to the public right of way with an average of every 30 linear feet along the entire development site frontage. Street trees shall be a minimum of 3 inches in caliber. When trees are not planted in a planter strip or landscaped area, tree wells with approved grates that provide a minimum of 16 square feet of surface area shall be provided for each tree. Alternative arrangements to linear street pattern may be implemented at the discretion of the approval authority. Existing preserve trees within 20 feet of the public right of way shall be counted towards fulfillment of this standard.

Exemptions from street tree requirements may be granted by the approval authority provided the following conditions exist. 1. Trees would create problems with existing above- or below-ground utilities. Trees would conflict with clear vision requirements or there is inadequate space in which to plant trees. However, the approval authority may require the applicant to plant an equivalent number of street trees elsewhere within the project design. If trees cannot be planted due to inadequate space or line clearance, the commensurate planting of shrubs or small trees more appropriate to the area may be required. Monotony of design in single or multiple building projects shall be avoided. Variation of detail form and siding shall be used to provide visual interest as follows: Pitched roofs are required and includes pitched gable end or hip roof small areas of flat roof not visible by the public or from adjoining residential areas may be allowed when necessary to accommodate mechanical equipment. Lighting of sidewalks, public and private pathways and access ways. Low level pedestrian lighting of less than .3 average foot candles and with a maximum uniformity of illumination ratio not to exceed 20:1 shall be required. On-site lighting shall be of a pedestrian scale. The approval authority shall approve all street and pathway lighting equipment.

Design standards for residential development: Dwelling units shall provide connections to the streetscape and public places with design elements such as with architectural design elements e.g., balconies and windows. Building design shall foster interest in compatibility between adjoining buildings through appropriate scale relationships. This shall be accomplished by a combination of A. Exterior building wall designs that provide distinct and separate areas with balconies and/or dormers and private outdoor spaces to give the impression of individual homes. Setting back facades to reduce the mass of large building or row of attached dwellings. Architectural features that provide a variety of harmonious colors, textures, material changes and rooflines i.e. gables, trim, details, bay windows, balconies, and verandas. The expanse of large facades in building plane shall be broken down into horizontal and vertical units through a mix of the following design elements: Recessed or projected entries in porches; mixing roof

gables and eaves facing on public sides of the buildings; appropriate use of windows to provide scales; dormers to break up roof expanses and balconies or projected bays.

Stakeholder Interview Briefing

There was some discussion as to stakeholder interviews. The point was raised that many people consider themselves “stakeholders” yet may not have been invited. Gus Duenas said that many people had been invited and not nearly that many attend these opportunities. The invitation is extended, however. If people are interested, they take the time to attend.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45pm.